

**Writing Situation:** Controversial topics are those about which people have very strong and often conflicting feelings and opinions—often stemming from religious, social, or political beliefs. Because the associated emotions are so strong, controversial topics tend to polarize people, and prompt them to make strong arguments for and against the subjects.<sup>1</sup> Though we may have very strong emotions and opinions about these issues, they are rarely black and white; more often, these are issues filled with many shades of gray and seeing the nuances is critical to our own growth and understanding. Exploring the many facets of controversial topics enables us to recognize different viewpoints, evaluate sources of information, and make more informed choices for ourselves.

**Writing Directions:** *Choose a social or environmental issue that you believe impacts our world today and that you want to explore in depth.* This might be a local issue, or one with more universal scope; regardless, the issue should be something you care about and are genuinely interested in exploring. Keep in mind that the issue you choose should be somewhat controversial and complex—that is, there needs to be more than one side to consider. Finally, remember that the best research questions are focused and precise: You cannot explore all of global warming, for instance, but might find success in considering the pros and cons of carbon trading. Believe it or not, it is much easier to write a paper on a narrow topic than a broad one!

Once you have chosen a topic, we will work together to refine it, formulate a viable research question, and gather evidence that will allow you to write the paper. You will then prepare a presentation and present your findings.

**Requirements:**

- 5-7 pages typed, double-spaced, MLA7 format
- Minimum of 5 sources
- All sources properly cited using MLA7 guidelines
- Annotated Bibliography
- Works Cited Page (properly formatted according to MLA7 guidelines)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: “Controversial Topics.” *Questia*. Questia Media America, Inc. 2010. Web. 22 Feb. 2010.

**Mrs. Munro**  
**English 11**  
**2012 Research Project Overview and Due Dates**

**Selecting a Topic and Designing a Research Question**

Assignments:	Research Paper Pre-writing	Due: 2/27
	Literal vs. Research Questions	Due: 2/27
	How to Write a Research Question	Due: 2/27
	Research Topic Worksheet	Due: 2/29

**Familiarizing Yourself with East High's Library Resources**

Assignments:	Notes from library presentation	Due: 2/29
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**Selecting Sources, Conducting Research, Citing Sources**

Assignments:	Works Cited Practice	Due: 2/24
	Summarizing/Paraphrasing/Quoting	Due: 3/2
	Preparing an Annotated Bibliography	Due: 3/19
	Works Cited Page	Due: 3/30

**Writing Your Paper**

Assignments:	Outline	Due: 3/21
	Introduction	Due: 3/22
	Rough Draft	Due: 3/28
	Peer Response/Revision	Due: 3/29
	Final Draft	Due: 4/11

**Evaluating Your Research Process**

Assignments:	Research Paper Reflection	Due: 4/11
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**NOTE: This is a tentative list. Many assignments will be completed in class; some due dates may be adjusted as we get further into the research process.**